



RHODE ISLAND

DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY  
*and* SECONDARY EDUCATION

# Guidelines for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Regulations

Chapter 16-54

*The regulations were adopted by  
the Rhode Island Board of Regents  
for Elementary and Secondary Education,  
September 14, 2000*

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

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## **Foreword**

The guidelines contained in this document were developed by the State to ensure the successful implementation of the Limited English Proficiency Regulations (Chapter 16-54, adopted on September 14, 2000). Thus, this is a companion document to the Regulations. Its purpose is to assist districts and schools in planning and providing quality programs for students with limited English proficiency.

**Guidelines for 2000 Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Regulations**  
**Chapter 16-54**  
**Adopted September 14, 2000**

**Introduction and Overview**

While clearly all Rhode Island educators are responsible for the appropriate education of Limited English proficient (LEP) students, ESL and bilingual teachers have an even greater responsibility since they deliver specialized instructional services to language minority students. These specialists must be knowledgeable of the ESL standards and all other state standards in order to insure that LEP students are provided quality programs that fully meet state regulations. More specifically, the English Language Proficiency Act for Limited English Students (Chapter 16-54) requires that Rhode Island educators:

- provide appropriate programs and services to Limited English Proficient (LEP) students
- have the same expectations for LEP students as for all students
- make instructional modifications to support LEP students
- provide the necessary supports to their programs to meet LEP students' individual linguistic and academic needs
- insure that administrative and teaching personnel serving students are appropriately qualified and certified

This document is designed to complement the regulations by providing guidelines to assist educators in meeting the spirit of the legislation enacted on behalf of students with Limited English Proficiency in the state of Rhode Island.

In order to appropriately implement the regulations, it is essential to recognize the diversity within the LEP population. LEP students enrolled in Rhode Island schools vary with respect to:

- their ethnolinguistic background
- their cultural characteristics
- their level of education
- their proficiency in their native language, including level of literacy
- their proficiency in English, including level of literacy
- their socioeconomic status
- their length of time in the country (if not born and raised in the United States)
- their level of experience with U.S. curriculum content (if coming from another educational environment); more specifically their exposure to curriculum that is planned around Rhode Island's curriculum frameworks.

All of these learner variables should be taken into consideration when planning responsive programs for LEP students. Certainly it will be more challenging to meet current state standards across the curriculum with students who have had limited access to school and who are not yet literate in their native language or English, than it will be to attain state standards with students who have age-appropriate levels of literacy in their native language and/or English and who have had continuous schooling experiences. If educators fail to recognize these important learner differences when planning programs, they will fail to design programs that are sufficiently responsive to students' needs, thus undermining their own success with all of their LEP students.

Likewise, it is important to consider district characteristics when planning programs in terms of:

- number of LEP students enrolled
- diversity in the LEP population (number of language groups represented)
- distribution of LEP students across schools
- current number of appropriately certified personnel
- current number of support persons with experience in working with LEP students and with facility in the languages spoken by families in the community

All of this information will be useful in selecting from among the available program options, the most appropriate program(s) for student and district characteristics. It can also assist districts in building the needed resources to implement the best program or programs for its LEP students.

### **Guidelines for the Provision of Services to LEP Students**

The guidelines are divided into eight sections. Each section addresses a different aspect of the regulations.

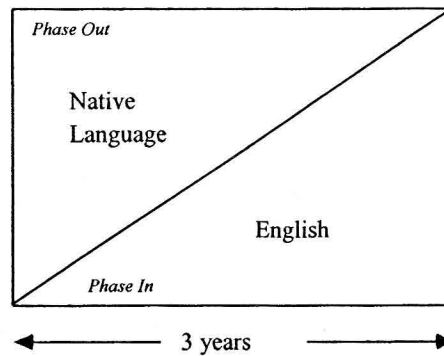
#### **I. Appropriate Programs for LEP Students**

While there are various models that have been designed to serve LEP students, three basic models are recommended: Transitional Bilingual, English as a Second Language, and Two-Way Bilingual Education Programs. Each of these will be highlighted in the sections below, drawing on the work of Fred Genesee in the publication Program Alternatives for Linguistically Diverse Students (1999).

##### **A. Transitional Bilingual Education**

Transitional bilingual education is the most common form of bilingual education for LEP students in the U.S. It provides academic instruction in students' primary language as they learn English so that students do not fall behind academically while they are in the process of learning English. As students acquire proficiency in English, content instruction once provided in the students' native language is gradually shifted from the first language to English. The "transition" in instructional language use is a very important aspect to monitor in order to make certain that it is neither premature nor delayed. Transitional Bilingual Education programs do not aim for full bilingualism. They use the students' first language to ensure grade-level mastery of academic content but only until students can transition to all-English instruction. This is what distinguishes Transitional Bilingual Education from Two-Way and other Maintenance Forms of Bilingual Education, as will be described later in this section--it uses the native language (L1) as a temporary support, typically for a period of three years, to insure learning (see model below).

### Transitional Bilingual Education



Many educators question the rationale for native language support at school. Use of the native language is argued on five major grounds: 1) personal, 2) social, 3) intellectual, 4) educational and 5) economic (NCBE, 1996). For example, it has been argued that the child's first language is critical to his/her identity. Maintenance of the native language helps the child to value his/her cultural heritage which contributes to a positive self-concept. This in turn has a positive effect on learning. Educationally, students who learn English and continue to develop their native language have higher academic achievement in later years than do students who learn English at the expense of their first language. Thus, there are cognitive and affective benefits to respecting and using the child's native language at school. There are also recognized individual and societal benefits of students having full proficiency in more than one language (TESOL, 1997). The following educational associations have taken strong positions endorsing the educational use of the child's native language: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE), and the International Reading Association (International Reading Association).

The following aspects must be well done in a Transitional Bilingual Education program if the program is to succeed:

- 1) effective first language instruction,
- 2) effective and continuous English language development,
- 3) provision of additional support for students who have difficulty in the early grades,
- 4) effective transition from one instructional language to the other,
- 5) use of sheltered instructional strategies when teaching in the second language,
- 6) careful and accurate assessment of students' needs,
- 7) implementation of high standards and a challenging curriculum,
- 8) access to native English speakers for social and academic purposes, and
- 9) active parental involvement (Genesee, 1999, p. 16).

Staff must also be well prepared if this model is to be successful. This means that teachers must be fully credentialed and proficient in the native language and English. There must also be sufficient high quality curricular and assessment resources in the native language and English to support the program and its goals, including technology-based resources.

This model is appropriate when:

- there is a sizable group of LEP students who speak the same primary language (e.g. a commonly applied standard is 20 students of the same language background, at the same grade level, enrolled at the same school)
- there are sufficient qualified bilingual teachers to staff the program

- there are sufficient instructional resources available to insure a high quality instructional program for students
- parental support for the program is high

Additional L1 Support Services. In addition to placing a child in a Transitional Bilingual Education program, schools might also make available the following supportive services in the native language to complement the instructional program: native language counseling services, home/school liaisons proficient in the native languages of the students, reading and mathematics support offered bilingually, related services offered bilingually (speech and language; resource room); school media/library services through the native language.

EFFECTIVE BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM CHECKLIST ✓	
1. <b>Vision and goals</b> exist, are communicated to students, and guide the Instruction.	
2. <b>Program leaders</b> are well-informed on the rationale for bilingual education and share an active commitment to bilingualism. They pro-actively involve the community and private sector in the design and development of the bilingual program.	
3. <b>Linkages to central office staff</b> are facilitated by clear roles and responsibilities of central staff. The central office staff provide leadership, credibility and respect for the program.	
4. <b>Program articulation</b> indicates that there is a common program of instruction across grade levels that has been aligned with developmentally appropriate practices and student language proficiency levels in English and students' first language.	
5. <b>Student assessment and progress monitoring</b> uses baseline student data on language and content knowledge to plan and adjust instruction.	
6. <b>Classroom and school organization</b> is based on the most efficient way of maximizing the impact of instruction. It creates small organizational arrangements (e.g., families, academic teams) to increase communication among teachers.	
7. <b>Classroom and school climate and environment</b> communicates, in concrete ways, high expectations to LEP students, a sense of family, a high level of trust among all school personnel, and shared responsibility and decision making.	
8. The program shows respect for a <b>diversity of cultures</b> . All languages used for instruction share equal status. Their use is determined by students' proficiency levels, and the students' first language is used to teach content areas.	
9. <b>Sufficient and appropriate books</b> and instructional materials are available in all languages used for instruction.	
10. <b>Instruction</b> is interactive, hands-on, collaborative and meaningful to students. It is innovative and uses a variety of techniques that respond to different learning styles. Instruction integrates the use of technology for both languages. It uses a "sheltered approach" to gradually introduce content area instruction In English.	
11. <b>Staff selection and development</b> includes screening to ensure proficiency in both languages, training for teachers to become action researchers and adjusting the program to ensure that all teachers are able to serve LEP students. Teachers feel supported and free to innovate.	
12. <b>Parents</b> feel welcome and play different roles (leadership, decision making, resource) in the educational process. The school provides opportunities for parents who do not speak English to participate.	
13. <b>Accountability</b> is improved when responsibilities for student success are clear and have been shared with all school personnel.	

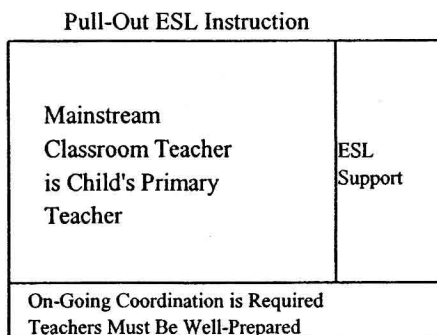
## B. English as a Second Language Program (ESL)

ESL programs are typically used in districts where the language minority population is very diverse and represents many different languages. Native language use is rare in ESL programs for this reason, although, at times teachers may provide instruction in the native language through the use of parent volunteers, peer tutors, or recorded materials to supplement the instruction they provide in English. It is important to properly understand that ESL programs are not “remedial” but developmental programs, as there is nothing that has gone awry that needs to be remediated, rather students are proceeding through the natural “developmental” sequence of acquiring a second language for personal and academic uses. In order to assist ESL students in the full acquisition of English (oralcy and literacy), and just as in the development of the language arts in mainstream classrooms, sequential, well-articulated programs must be offered over time, delivered by competent professionals.

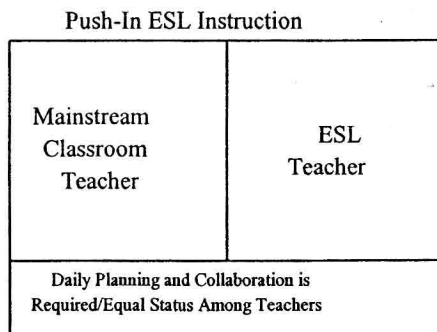
ESL models are appropriate when:

- there is great diversity in terms of the languages spoken by the LEP students in the district or school
- there are sufficiently certified teachers in English as a Second Language
- parents prefer that their children be educated only in English

In the elementary grades, schools may be considering a “pull-out” or “push-in” model of ESL instruction. In the “pull-out” model students spend most of their day in the mainstream classroom, and are “pulled out” for support from a certified ESL teacher.



In push-in models, the ESL teacher goes into the classroom to provide support to the student(s) by becoming one of the child's primary teachers, following a co-teacher or collaborative model of instruction.



### Co-Teaching Model

Because these models provide limited support to students, they often fail to insure a full, high-quality instructional program to students. To work well, they must be well-designed and

implemented, the ESL instruction provided must be carefully articulated with the general education curriculum, mainstream and ESL teachers must actively coordinate instruction with one another, both teachers must understand how to work with LEP students, and the flow of the instructional day must be as seamless as possible. All of this requires daily administrative planning periods to be provided to the teachers involved.

“Pull out” models often waste students’ valuable instructional time in transit between their mainstream classroom and the ESL classroom, interrupt the flow of the instructional day, inappropriately group students of diverse grade levels, and cause students to “miss” valuable instruction provided to their classmates. “Push-in” models are challenging in terms of the provision of specialized instruction within the classroom during the same time that other instruction is occurring and the effective utilization of both certified teachers; the latter being a particularly difficult issue to surmount. Teachers will want to determine who will teach what and how, what materials they will use, how they will group students, etc., assigning very clear responsibilities to each teacher, and insuring that ESL students are not segregated within the classroom. The maximum number of teaching personnel that can work effectively in a given classroom space must also be assessed, following best practices guidelines. As is evident, co-teaching, team teaching or collaborative teaching, and inclusion models require extensive preparation of the teachers, daily planning, and administrative support.

For all of these reasons, it is recommended that schools offer an intensive and comprehensive educational program to ESL students taught by well prepared, state-certified teachers; teachers who are endorsed in ESL and teach all subjects using ESL approaches. This type of program provides the most comprehensive and well-articulated service to students. Teachers working in such classrooms are highly encouraged to seek National Board Certification in English as a New Language to demonstrate their specialized capabilities in

Comprehensive Program

All Academic Subjects	Second Language and Literacy Development
ESL Approach	

Dually-Certified Teacher

serving ESL students, as having exemplary teachers is a major contributor to and indicator of a quality program. In addition, comprehensive programs are standards-based to insure that students acquire the needed academic knowledge and skills to succeed in mainstream classrooms.

In cases where comprehensive ESL programming is not possible, due to low numbers of ESL students per grade level, schools must recognize that it is the classroom teacher who is accountable for the ESL student’s instructional program—they monitor growth, fill out the child’s report card, link with the home and community, and insure access to the full curriculum. In these cases, ESL teachers provide limited support (minutes per day), and they should be considered a supplement and support to the mainstream program. In extremely low incidence districts where hiring a certified ESL teacher is not possible, teaching assistants (preferably speakers of the students’ native language) or other tutorial options, under the guidance of a designated certified teacher will be necessary. However, in all cases the districts must insure that service providers are adequately prepared and that, together with the classroom teachers, they create a well-articulated program (See Low Incidence Program Guidelines which follow). Irrespective of the model in use, the students’ core program must meet the tests of a quality program for ESL students, including

the preparation of the teachers delivering instruction and the appropriateness of the materials and strategies in use, beginning in Kindergarten and continuing through Grade 12.

Districts with fewer than 50 students should cluster elementary-aged students into service centers/designated classrooms by grade level clusters (Pre-K-K; 1-2; 3-4; 5-6). In this manner, classroom teachers can provide special language development programs (ESL and English Language Arts instruction),

*Special Considerations for Low Incidence Districts  
(fewer than 50 per district)*

- √ Prepare all teachers to effectively serve their ESL students, using local and regional in-service training offerings, supported college coursework, and attendance at relevant conferences and institutes. Use the School Improvement process and I-Plan to coordinate these efforts.
- √ If using a “push-in” or “pull-out” model, maximize the work of the ESL teacher/tutor by creating daily/weekly communication (coordination time) between that professional and the affected classroom teachers.
- √ Strive for daily ESL instructional support, with the length of the instructional periods never falling below 45 minutes. Determine the focus of the ESL instructional support: content-based ESL, oral language development, literacy development, etc. and insure that it is well-coordinated with the rest of the child’s instructional day.
- √ Cluster students for specialized instruction; reduce class size in the affected classrooms so that needs can be met
- √ Establish appropriate grading and reporting; promotion/retention policies.
- √ Provide standards-based ESL instruction to students of the same proficiency level (beginners, intermediates) by grade level clusters (e.g. K-2, 3-5, 6-8).
- √ Given the importance of high levels of literacy to school success, insure that all persons teaching reading and writing to LEP students understand the important differences between learning to read/write in a first language and learning to read/write in a second.
- √ Find ways to reach out to families, using regional and local resources, (clergy, community agency personnel, other bilingual parents, university students, etc.).
- √ Enlist the support of regular volunteers who commit to work with the students over time. Invest in these volunteers by orienting them to school district policies and procedures, and ESL teaching approaches and materials. Where possible, establish on-going relationships with colleges and universities that prepare teachers to work with English Language Learners to insure a steady stream of qualified volunteers.

and modified content area instruction. Mainstreaming can occur to Art, Music and Physical Education, but by concentrating students into the same classes, teachers will be better able to focus on their unique instructional needs. Students with special instructional needs must be provided more intensive support, including after-school and other specially-designed support programs.

At the secondary level, some schools provide content-based ESL programs, sheltered instruction, or “hybrid” classes (ESL Algebra; ESL Chemistry; ESL Global History, etc.). These classes are typically taught by a person who is certified in the content area and who possesses an ESL endorsement. The subject matter taught to all students is taught to ESL students through “sheltered” instructional approaches. In sheltered instruction, teachers modify instruction to meet the language development needs of LEP students. Lessons have content and language development objectives and instruction is modified to make it comprehensible to second language learners using specific ESL methodology.

In summary, some features of well-designed ESL programs include:

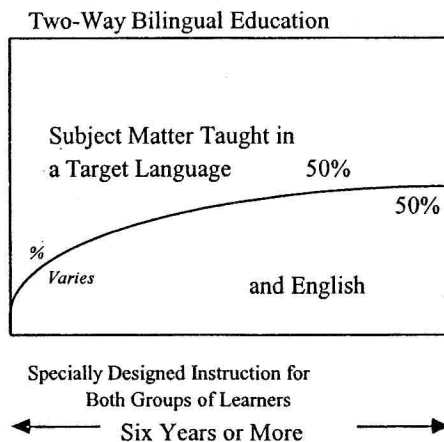
- clearly defined language and content objectives across subjects and grade levels,
- use of specialized materials and “scaffolded” instruction,
- high levels of interaction between more and less proficient students, and
- use of alternative assessment,
- appropriately certified and adequately prepared teachers who deliver challenging, high quality programs that promote language development and content learning.

A current weakness of some ESL programs is that they do not place sufficient emphasis on second language literacy development and the teaching of grade-appropriate content, and therefore when students transition to all-English classes, they sometimes have not developed the necessary skills to succeed in the mainstream. This can cause unnecessary referral of LEP students to Teacher Support Teams, or worse, to special education when it is not warranted. A condition for determining the success of an ESL program, then, would be the degree of literacy skills and academic content learning attained by students.

### C. Two-way Bilingual Program

Two-way Bilingual programs are an enrichment form of bilingual education where native English speakers and native speakers of another language are provided integrated language and academic instruction with the goals of high academic achievement. The program is designed to promote high levels of academic achievement, additive bilingualism (first and second language proficiency), and cross-cultural understanding. Most programs start in kindergarten or first grade and continue through the end of elementary school; some into middle school. Each class is composed of 50% of native English speakers and 50% of speakers of the other language. The non-English language is used at least 50% of the time during academic instruction. In some programs, the target language is used 90% of the time initially, and then gradually decreased until both languages are being used half of the time. This is considered an enrichment form of bilingual education because all students have the opportunity to learn a second language and can serve as first language models for the other group.

In high quality two-way bilingual programs, special strategies are used to teach language and content in an integrative fashion, the two languages are actively and systematically developed (including literacy), the program lasts for at least 4-6 years to insure high levels of proficiency in both languages, there is active parental involvement and student assessment is ongoing to promote language and academic development.



All instructional staff must be appropriately credential and fully bilingual. If some teachers

are fully proficient in only one language, then instruction must be organized according to the language proficiency of the teachers (separation of languages by teachers who instruct in one designated language).

This model is appropriate when:

- there is a sizable group of LEP students who speak the same primary language
- there are sufficient qualified bilingual teachers to staff the program
- the parents and local community desire an enrichment program in which their children can become bilingual and biliterate and cross-culturally competent while receiving a quality educational program

## II. Services

Basic services for ESL students enrolled in a district include: a) intake procedures to identify and place students appropriately, b) assessment to determine instructional needs and strengths, c) the provision of well designed academic instruction that accounts for their status as second language learners, d) specially designed language development programs, access to pupil personnel services, e) parent notification, outreach and support services, and f) transition support as students move from specially designed programs to unmodified general educational programs (CCSSO, 1992).

According to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, programs for English Language Learners must be comprehensive and address both English language development and subject matter instruction (1999). Districts must specify the philosophy, goals and components of their program, the staffing and other resources to be provided, and the means for monitoring student performance, transitioning students, and evaluating program effectiveness.

A. Identification and Placement. Students should be identified and placed in specially-tailored programs as soon as possible after registration. Those involved in placing ESL students must insure that students are placed in age-appropriate classrooms. While extent of previous schooling should be considered in making placements, the social nature of schooling cannot be ignored. The placement of ESL students must simultaneously account for both social and academic factors, with needed academic supports following students into their most appropriate grade level placement. For example, students with limited formal schooling might require being placed with a particular team of teachers who collaborate to provide them with intensive language and literacy development and academic instruction that is both developmentally and age appropriate (materials and activities). Furthermore, they might be provided with counseling support if indicated. At the secondary level, where individual course programming is possible, native language literacy skills, prior schooling, and students' interests and goals are primary considerations for placement into courses. As per Chapter 16-54, students should never be placed more than one year below their peers, except in cases at the secondary level where graduation requirements may dictate such placement.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (1999), procedures for identifying potential LEP students must be specified, including the timeframes and persons responsible for each step in the identification procedures. Districts must insure that both the criteria and personnel administering the procedures are well selected. Parents must be fully informed and included in the process.

B. Assessment. As stated in Chapter 16-54, districts must identify the primary language of the student at the time of registration through the state-developed Home Language Survey (appended). Language proficiency assessment should be an on-going process with both the native and second languages assessed, minimally for the initial placement decisions. As indicated in the

regulations, both oral language and literacy should be assessed, and both formal and informal assessment tools should be used to provide the most comprehensive picture of a student's language capabilities. Those with strong native language skills will usually excel within a short period of time, whereas those with weak native language skills often struggle to achieve and need more intensive and long lasting services to attain state standards. Knowledge of a student's native and second language proficiency is a very useful indicator to use in planning a comprehensive and responsive program.

In addition, teachers must assess all academic subjects to determine a student's level of knowledge and skills. In high incidence languages, there are many assessment tools for this purpose that can be administered by competent professionals. However, in lower incidence languages, it may be necessary to use familiar measures in English with the help of a translator or interpreter. In such cases, the results must be cautiously interpreted as they may underestimate a student's true abilities. Prior schooling records must also be obtained to understand the nature and extent of previous schooling and any special learning needs that may have already been identified in other school settings. The following pages, excerpted from the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Resource Center guide Evaluation of Instructional Services for Bilingual Students (February, 2000), can assist districts in conducting a self-assessment of their student assessment system.

## Evaluation of Instructional Services for Bilingual Students

### STUDENT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Assess each feature below by circling the appropriate rating.

1 = Not evident at all    5 = Strongly evident    DK = Don't know

- |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1  | A home language survey is used to identify non-native speakers of English.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 2  | The multiple criteria used to identify and reassess the specialized support services needed by bilingual students and those with disabilities are well-defined.           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 3  | An assessment of oral and written English language proficiency is conducted annually.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 4  | An assessment of oral and written language proficiency is conducted annually in the students' native languages.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 5  | Assessment is conducted through multiple informal and formal standardized measures.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 6  | The guidelines that outline the assessment process are clearly formalized by district policy.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 7  | Information regarding bilingual students' families and educational backgrounds is collected and used for decisions regarding the specialized services that students need. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 8  | Assessment information is disseminated to all persons working with bilingual students.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 9  | Bilingual student assessment is matched to the school/district-adopted instructional program and curriculum objectives.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 10 | Assessment procedures are adequately modified for bilingual students with disabilities.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 11 | Extensive data are gathered prior to a referral of bilingual students suspected of having special needs.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 12 | Bilingual student evaluations for case studies are conducted by bilingual qualified psychologists or with the assistance of trained interpreters.                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 13 | Instruments selected for student assessment are reliable, valid, practical and equitable for the bilingual population.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

## Evaluation of Instructional Services for Bilingual Students

### STUDENT PROGRESS DOCUMENTATION

Assess each feature below by circling the appropriate rating

1 = Not evident at all    5 = Strongly evident    DK = Don't Know

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Provision is made for ongoing assessment of content area concepts in a way that is meaningful to the student in  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| a. Social Studies   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| b. Science  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| c. Mathematics.   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| 2. Bilingual student progress is documented on an ongoing basis in English language proficiency for   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| a. Oral language development  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| b. Literacy   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| 3. Bilingual student progress is documented on an ongoing basis in native language proficiency for  |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| a. Oral language development  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| b. Literacy   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| 4. Information on bilingual student progress is communicated among all teachers on a regular basis.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| 5. Information on the progress of bilingual students and those with disabilities is communicated to parents on a regular basis in a way that is meaningful to them. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| 6. Information on bilingual student progress is used to modify instruction on an ongoing basis.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| 7. Grading of bilingual students is fair and realistic.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| 8. Documentation of progress is directly aligned to school/district-adopted curriculum (or IEP) objectives.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

The reader is also referred to the specific recommendations made by the Council of Chief State School Officers (1992) regarding the identification, assessment and placement of students with limited English proficiency.

If a district is being monitored by the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (1999), the district plan must give a detailed description of the district's procedures for assessing LEP students, both the skills to be assessed and the methods and instruments for doing so. Guidelines and criteria for use of each instrument or method are to be included along with timeframes for each step of the assessment process. Persons who conduct the assessments must be adequately prepared to administer the assessments and interpret the results. Records must be kept and parents must be notified of the results and invited to give their input.

State policies with respect to inclusion of ESL students in statewide assessments should also be consulted and followed to insure the equitable and appropriate treatment of ESL students in large-scale accountability procedures.

C. Instruction. Specially tailored instruction must be made available to students delivered by competent and well-trained professionals. Without such instruction, students cannot achieve the high academic standards set by local and state policy makers. According to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (1999), districts must specify their philosophy of instruction based on sound educational theories, the methods they will use to develop students' English language skills and the instructional methods and services they will offer so that students can meaningfully participate in the academic and special programs of the district. The district must also specify the criteria used to decide the appropriate amount and type of services to be provided to students, parents must be notified of the various program options available, and the program must have oversight. In addition, instruction must be based on each student's language, literacy and academic needs as documented by the data collected during the intake phase.

On the pages that follow, self-assessment tools are provided to assist districts in evaluating the quality of the ESL instruction, native language instruction, and the academic instruction provided to LEP students.

## Evaluation of Instructional Services for Bilingual Students

### ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) INSTRUCTION

Assess each feature below by circling the appropriate

1 = Not evident at all    5 = Strongly evident    DK = Don't know

1	ESL curriculum objectives are aligned with those of the school/district-adopted curriculum (or IEP)	1	2	3	4	5	DK
2	ESL curriculum objectives are well-articulated for content-based oral language and literacy development.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
3	Instruction in ESL is provided to students on the basis of individual needs as identified through assessment.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
4	Content-based ESL instruction is provided on a regularly scheduled basis.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
5	Student-centered teaching strategies represent a variety of methods, approaches and techniques that respond to individual learning styles.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
6	Students have ample opportunity for meaningful interaction with peers and the teacher in the ESL classroom.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
7	Instruction is provided by approved or certificated ESL or bilingual teachers (at the elementary level).	1	2	3	4	5	DK
8	Instruction is provided by teachers who are proficient in English.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
9	Instructional materials that are used reflect the curriculum (or IEP) objectives.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
10	Sufficient instructional and enrichment materials are available for the number of students served.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
11	The students' interests, experiences and culture are integrated into the instructional program.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
12	Assessment is matched to the school/district adopted instructional program and curriculum (or IEP) objectives.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
13	Technology is integrated into the curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5	DK

## Evaluation of Instructional Services for Bilingual Students

### NATIVE LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

Assess each feature below by circling the appropriate rating.

1 = Not evident at all    5 = Strongly evident    DK = Don't know

1	Curriculum objectives are aligned with those of the school/district approved curriculum (or IEP).	1	2	3	4	5	DK
2	Curriculum objectives are clearly defined for literacy development.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
3	Curriculum (or IEP) objectives are clearly defined for						
	a. Social Studies	1	2	3	4	5	DK
	b. Science	1	2	3	4	5	DK
	c. Mathematics	1	2	3	4	5	DK
4	Instruction is provided to students on the basis of individual needs as identified through the district assessment plan.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
5	Instruction is scheduled on a regular basis for						
	a. Literacy	1	2	3	4	5	DK
	b. Social Studies, Science and Mathematics.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
6	Student-centered teaching strategies represent a variety of methods, approaches and techniques that respond to individual learning styles.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
7	There is ample opportunity for meaningful interaction in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
8	Instruction is provided primarily by approved bilingual teachers.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
9	Instruction of students with special needs is provided by appropriately trained personnel.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
10	Modifications and adaptations have been made in instruction to permit bilingual students with disabilities to participate in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
11	Instructional materials that are used reflect the curriculum (or IEP) objectives.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
12	Sufficient instructional and enrichment materials are available for the number of students served.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
13	The students' interests, experiences and cultures are integrated into the instructional program.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
14	Technology is integrated into the curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	DK

## Evaluation of Instructional Services for Bilingual Students

### ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Assess each feature below by circling the appropriate rating.

1 = Not evident at all    5 = Strongly evident    DK = Don't Know

- |    |  |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1. | Curriculum objectives for bilingual students are aligned with school/district-adopted curriculum and standards for   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|    | a. Social Studies  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|    | b. Science   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|    | c. Mathematics   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|    |  |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| 2. | Lesson plans reflect school/district-adopted curriculum (or IEP) goals and objectives for  |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|    | a. Social Studies  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|    | b. Science   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|    | c. Mathematics   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|    |  |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| 3. | Provisions have been made for articulation of objectives for bilingual students with disabilities among special education, bilingual/ESL education, and general education. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|    |  |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| 4. | Instruction is scheduled on a regular basis for  |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|    | a. Social Studies  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|    | b. Science   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|    | c. Mathematics   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|    |  |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| 5. | Instructional materials that are used reflect the school/district-adopted curriculum (or IEP) objectives and standards for   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|    | a. Social Studies  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|    | b. Science   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|    | c. Mathematics   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|    |  |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| 6. | Sufficient instructional materials are available for bilingual students with disabilities.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|    |  |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| 7. | Delivery of curriculum is well coordinated among all instructional personnel.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|    |  |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| 8. | Teaching strategies used in the classroom represent a variety of methods, approaches and techniques that are meaningful to students in the areas of                        |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|    | a. Social Studies  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|    | b. Science   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|    | c. Mathematics   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|    |  |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| 9. | As students' English language proficiency develops, support services in the academic content areas change accordingly.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

10. Technology is integrated into the curriculum. 1 2 3 4 5 DK

As indicated in Chapter 16-54, the level and nature of services to be delivered to students should vary based on students' proficiency characteristics. While time in specialized instructional programs is one indicator of the adequacy of services provided, instructional quality is even more important. The SALT process is one way that districts can examine the quality of the instruction to insure that they are doing everything possible to support students so that they achieve high standards (See Self-Study Guide: Closing the Performance Gaps of English Language Learners: Saltworks). By focusing on student learning, teaching, and the school; the three interrelated focus areas of the SALT process; districts can continuously identify areas for improvement and take the necessary steps to improve the education they offer ESL students.

An additional tool is available for this purpose, the English as a Second Language Standards-based Program Evaluation and School Improvement guide produced by the National Study of School Evaluation ([www.nsse.org](http://www.nsse.org)), as a part of its Indicators of Schools of Quality series. By focusing on nationally-recognized indicators of instructional and organizational effectiveness for English as a Second Language programs and developing program improvement plans accordingly, schools can set appropriate goals for school improvement.

D. Guidance. Counselors must actively monitor the success of students in their educational programs. The services provided and approaches used can be jointly reviewed by teachers and school counselors and modified accordingly. Counselors can also provide services to students with emotional or behavioral needs, those with attendance problems, or those whose families require special assistance. This must be done in the most appropriate language and with sensitivity to cross-cultural dimensions of the process. In addition, teachers and counselors should encourage ESL students to become involved in extracurricular activities at all grade levels. Counselors can be very instrumental in making sure that ESL students are an integral part of the student body and included in every facet of school life. The Office for Civil Rights (1999) and Rhode Island regulations require that students have equal access to the full range of district programs, including special education, Title I, gifted and talented programs, and nonacademic and extra curricular activities. Parental notification is critical to ensuring equal access and all steps must be taken to communicate effectively with families who speak languages other than English.

E. Exiting/Transition. During the transition from specialized services to unmodified general education programs, teachers and counselors must ensure that the transition proceeds smoothly and that students are academically successful. The active monitoring of student performance as they transition from specialized services to unmodified instructional environments is required by both federal (Office for Civil Rights, 1999) and state regulations (Chapter 16-54). Teachers and counselors can be very instrumental in ensuring that this goes well.

## Strategies for Teaching English Learners: Observation Checklist

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_  
 School \_\_\_\_\_  
 Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of Students \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Observer \_\_\_\_\_  
 Lesson Observed \_\_\_\_\_  
 Start \_\_\_\_\_ Finish \_\_\_\_\_

	Observed	Not observed	Not applicable		Observed	Not Observed	Not applicable
<b>A. Comprehensible Input and Output</b>				<b>C. "Sheltered" Content Instruction</b>			
1. Uses contextual references (visuals realia).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Modifies the language input according to the needs of the students (e.g., rate of speech, added definitions and examples, controlled vocabulary, and careful use of idioms).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Implements listening activities to assist students in developing the sounds of English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Reviews main topic and key vocabulary and ideas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Allows for an initial listening (or "silent") period for students at the pre-production level.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Checks frequently for understanding.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Uses a variety of questioning strategies and activities to meet the needs of individuals at varying stages of language acquisition.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Bridges new "unknown" material to "known" – what students have already learned.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Exposes students to higher levels of comprehensible language (i+1).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Organizes instruction around themes and content appropriate to students' grade level.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Links new vocabulary and language to previously learned information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Engages students in active participation activities and responses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Provides activities and opportunities for increased student talk as students develop English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Integrates culture and content instruction.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Taps into and accesses students' prior knowledge.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Uses added resources and strategies to help students access core curriculum.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>B. Negotiating of Meaning</b>				<b>D. Thinking Skills</b>			
1. Monitors student comprehension through interactive means such as checking for comprehension and clarification, utilizing questioning strategies, having students paraphrase, define, and model.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Asks questions, gives directions, and generates activities to advance students to higher levels of thinking (from recalling to evaluating).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Modifies instruction as needed using strategies such as scaffolding, expansion, Demonstration, and modeling.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Elicits student questions and encourages them to support their answers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Encourages students to communicate in English, using familiar vocabulary and structures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Allows ample wait time after asking questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Modifies teacher-talk to make input comprehensible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Guides students through learning using varied groupings and configurations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Uses extra-linguistic clues (e.g., gestures, facial expressions) to emphasize or clarify meaning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>E. Error Correction</b>			
6. Matches language with experience.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Practices sensitive error correction, focusing on errors of meaning rather than form.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Models the language with natural speech and intonation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Accepts appropriate student responses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Provides opportunities for students to use English with varied audiences and for a variety of purposes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Encourages taking risks in English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				4. Develops classroom activities to			

F. Parent Outreach/Notification. According to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (1999), provisions must be made for language-appropriate notice to the parents of ESL students regarding all school activities. Parents must be well informed about their child's progress, school procedures and schedules, extracurricular activities, special meetings and events, and their rights to examine information and be involved in all educational decisions related to their child.

**See: Appendix A: Quality Services for LEP Students: Self-Assessment** to determine if your program is currently in compliance with Rhode Island's Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Regulations/Chapter 16-54.

### **III. Instructional Modifications**

Effective teachers of English Language Learners do the following things to insure that instruction is comprehensible and meaningful (Short, 1993):

- Provide background information or activate students' prior knowledge on a topic
- Pre-teach needed vocabulary, structures, phrases, idiomatic expressions to insure comprehension
- Pay attention to the language demands and employ ESL strategies that will help students learn the academic language associated with the topic
- Consider the language demands of in-class assignments and homework; quizzes, tests and other means of evaluation
- Adjust their instructional language for the proficiency of the students (e.g. plan their questions to insure that students have the requisite proficiency to respond the way they are asked).
- Offer opportunities to communicate about the topic in oral, written, physical, or pictorial forms
- Provide native language instruction or clarifications when needed or desirable to insure effective learning
- Consider the cultural compatibility of classroom structures and routines as well as teaching styles to the students to create a conducive climate for learning
- Provide hands-on and performance-based activities
- Use contextual clues to support their verbal instruction (models, demonstrations, visuals, realia); use multi-modality teaching approaches
- Use graphic organizers to help students to represent information and identify relationships
- Make connections between the content being taught and students' life experiences
- Incorporate cooperative learning activities and peer support
- Check on students' comprehension frequently and provide plentiful feedback

In addition, effective teachers often explicitly teach students learning strategies they can use to support their learning (previewing a text; use of mental imagery, guessing from context; asking questions for clarification) during content area instruction so that they can become more independent, despite the fact that they are learning through the medium of a second language.

A checklist is included below to assist teachers in conducting a self-evaluation of their teaching strategies use.

9. Verifies that all students comprehend before moving on.

☐ ☐ ☐

address recurring or systematic errors.

☐ ☐ ☐

5. Allows for flow of uninterrupted student thought.

☐ ☐ ☐

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**F. Classroom Climate**

1. Uses relevant material.

☐ ☐ ☐

2. Displays of student work are evident.

☐ ☐ ☐

3. Utilizes (and demonstrates respect for) students' home language and culture.

☐ ☐ ☐

4. Nurtures a positive climate.

☐ ☐ ☐

5. Rewards all attempts at language.

☐ ☐ ☐

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Adopted from "Two Way Bilingual Immersion: Teaching Strategies Checklist" by Luporine-Hakmi and Molina, *Center for Applied Linguistics*.

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#### IV. Supports to Programs

A. Appropriate Materials. According to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (1999), districts must ensure that students have access to a quality education, including appropriate materials and resources (specialized books and equipment) of the same quantity and quality offered to native English speakers (comparable to the programs provided to English proficient students). Districts will want to conduct classroom visits and speak with teachers to insure that this is the case.

B. Technology. Some studies have found that LEP students have limited access to technology (New York State Education Department, 1996). For example, in the Spring of 1996, New York State conducted a survey to determine the use of technology applications in English as a Second Language and Bilingual Education Programs. Only a small percent of respondents indicated that their students had access to either e-mail (11%) or the Internet (15%). Only 16% reported having a formal district plan for the use of technology with LEP students and only 17% indicated that there was a building plan for such purposes. They cited lack of resources as the most serious impediment to use of technology in their programs. Despite the promise of technology for the second language classroom (Hanson-Smith, 1997), programs must take affirmative steps to insure that their LEP students have equal access to technology to support their learning. The use of audio, video, and computer-based instructional materials are especially recommended.

C. After-School Programs/Tutoring. All students can benefit from one-to-one attention, especially students who are learning through a second language and in a new cultural context. Especially for those with interrupted or limited formal schooling, additional supports may be required. Districts need to offer a variety of tutoring arrangements and after-school programs to compliment their core instructional program. Study buddies, bilingual phone tutors, cross-age tutors, and mentoring programs are just a few of the available options districts may want to consider to provide additional support to their English Language Learners.

D. Personnel. According to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (1999), the number and categories of instructional staff must be determined by the district so that an adequate number of personnel are available to implement the district's program of services. This would include qualified teachers (including specialist teachers such as Title I teachers, early intervention specialists and the like), interpreters, assessors, teaching assistants, and other specialists (speech and language clinicians, guidance counselors, school social workers, etc.). Districts must state the methods and criteria they use to ensure that staff are fully qualified to serve ESL students. The Rhode Island LEP Regulations (Chapter 16-54) provide specific guidelines for the qualifications of system-wide administrators, program coordinators, teachers, teacher assistants, school/community liaisons, and guidance counselors (*See: Staffing Section of Quality Services for LEP Students: Self-Assessment* or the regulations themselves). In general, personnel must possess the requisite language proficiency, certification, and experience to insure that fully qualified and proficient professionals are providing services to English Language Learners. In order to insure that teachers and other instructional personnel, home school liaisons, and guidance counselors are proficient in English and, where appropriate, languages other than English, districts must establish procedures for assessing their proficiency and conduct thorough proficiency assessments during the hiring process.

Given the cultural and linguistic diversity present in Rhode Island Schools and the rigorous academic goals established for our students, an on-going plan for professional

development should be developed and implemented to make certain that all teachers serving ESL students are fully prepared to do so. Through the school improvement planning process, SALT visits (School Accountability for Learning and Teaching), and teacher's development of their Individual Professional Development plans (I-Plans), the professional development needs of teachers to serve all students, including those with limited English proficiency, will be systematically considered. In addition, the following checklist may assist in identifying teachers' areas in which teacher might expand their repertoire of knowledge and skills in serving English Language Learners.

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

### Evaluation of Instructional Services for Bilingual Students

#### TEACHER/STAFF EFFECTIVENESS

Assess each feature below by circling the appropriate rating

1 = Not evident at all    5 = Strongly evident    DK = Don't Know

- |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1 | The teacher conveys clearly to the bilingual students required classroom tasks, activities and expectations.                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 2 | Language is used in such a way as to promote learning of academic content.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 3 | By constantly monitoring bilingual students' performance, the teacher is able to modify the instructional program as needed. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 4 | The teacher has created an instructional environment that promotes interaction among all students.                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 5 | The teacher uses effective classroom management strategies for   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|   | a. Time  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
|   | b. Discipline  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 6 | The teacher has created an instructional environment which accommodates the different learning styles of students.           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 7 | The teacher allows students the opportunity to participate in setting goals for their own learning.                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 8 | The teacher treats students with patience, dignity and respect.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| 9 | The teacher praises students' performance appropriately.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

10	The teacher incorporates the students' personal interests and experiences into lessons.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
11	The teacher encourages students to engage in higher-order thinking skills.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
12	The teacher maintains high expectations of all students.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
13	The teacher takes pride in his/her work.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
14	The teacher shows a willingness to try out new ideas in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
15	The teacher initiates discussion with colleagues regarding instructional issues.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
16	The teacher seeks ongoing professional development.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
17	Teacher/staff who serve bilingual students with disabilities have appropriate special education support and resources.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
18	Teachers/staff who serve bilingual students with disabilities have been adequately trained to develop and implement IEP goals and objectives.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
19	Teachers/staff show sensitivity to, and willingness to modify instruction for bilingual students with disabilities.	1	2	3	4	5	DK

#### E. Use of Other Support Programs/Coordination of Services

As stated in Section II D above, The Office for Civil Rights (1999) and Rhode Island regulations require that students have equal access to the full range of district programs, including special education, Title I, gifted and talented programs, and nonacademic and extra-curricular activities. In those cases where students are receiving services from a range of providers and funding sources, there must be active coordination to insure that students' programs have philosophical integrity, are well articulated, meaningful, and complete. All providers must be adequately prepared to serve English Language Learners and their lack of competence should never be used to bar students from services; rather the staff deficiency must be addressed to insure equal access.

#### V. Regular Education Placement/"Mainstreaming"

A. Determining When to Mainstream/When to Exit. Perhaps one of the most demanding decisions is when to begin to mainstream students into general education classes and when to exit them from services. As indicated in the regulations, a combination of student assessment results and professional judgments are to be used to make such determinations. No student should be mainstreamed to an all-English classroom without the requisite proficiency to benefit from such a placement (CCSSO, 1992). Great care must be taken to insure that the student has the social and academic language proficiency (listening/speaking/reading/writing) to meet classroom demands. Once exited, students must be monitored for a period of two years to insure that the decision to exit was correct and that students no longer require LEP program services to perform successfully. All areas must be monitored, including English Language Arts, major content area subjects, and overall adjustment into the mainstream setting.

(See: *Exiting/Monitoring Section of Quality Services for LEP Students: Self-Assessment*)

B. Grading/Promotion and Retention in the Mainstream. Related to the previous discussion, it is simply unacceptable to give students D's and F's because they are not sufficiently proficient in English to perform at grade level. Students should not be placed into mainstream classes unless they are sufficiently proficient and prepared to experience academic success and unless the appropriate modifications, including how students will be graded, are established. With appropriate modifications, students with developing proficiency (Intermediate/Advanced students) may be perfect candidates for mainstreaming. If they are mainstreamed, grading adaptations may be useful--for example using a pass/fail system of grading; using an individualized grading system; or using subscripts that indicate the actual grade level of performance next to the letter grade, e.g. B<sub>3</sub> for a fourth grader who received a grade of B but is currently reading/writing at a 3rd grade level.

A more troubling phenomena is the inappropriate use of retention to "give students more time" to learn English. Instead of helping students, retention often harms students both academically and socially. It can cause psychological damage to children (low self-esteem; self-concept), over time can actually decrease achievement rather than raise it, and can lead to dropping out of school in later years. African American and Hispanic students have been shown to be retained at twice the rate of White students, especially those who come from the lowest socioeconomic classes. Furthermore, it is expensive. Given that it has not been found to be effective in improving student achievement as hoped by those engaging in the practice (IDRA,

2000), its use is questioned. When used with English Language Learners, the practice may point to an unwillingness to modify the instructional environment to better meet the needs of learners; rather learners are “punished” for not fitting in by being held back. Especially in districts where high numbers of LEP students are retained in the early grades, a “red flag” exists that should cue district administrators to continued needs for professional development and a grave need for curriculum and instructional reform.

## **VI. Setting Appropriate Expectations for English Language Learners.**

A. Value of Knowing L1 Status. It is well documented that knowledge of a first language supports the development of a second language (Cummins, 1991; Hudelson, 1987; Lukas & Katz, 1994; Thonis, 1983, TESOL, 1997). The more proficient students are in their native language, the greater success we would predict them to have in learning English and in attaining academic success. For this reason, knowing the status of the primary language is always very important to designing an appropriate level of support for students, whether we will offer bilingual services or not. Those who lack proficiency in their native language and have limited or interrupted schooling will need far greater support than those who are functioning at age/grade level expectations. Their attainment of standards, and indeed their probability of graduating may be in jeopardy if we do not provide the intensity of support needed based on their entry status. Some students may need substantial native language enrichment and intensive academic preparation in order to achieve the same level of success as those who enter school ready to learn.

B. What Does It Mean to Know English? In the past, some believed that students were proficient in English if they could speak it well enough to function in everyday interpersonal contexts. Now it has been established that students should not be considered proficient until they have mastered academic as well as social English. Whereas students usually acquire basic, social and day-to-day communication skills within one to two years, it can take much longer to acquire the more demanding aspects of formal or academic language (that needed to process textbook language, written text, tests, lectures, literary works). Most researchers have shown that it can take five years or more to develop academic English; exactly the type of English required to be successful at school. What this means to programs is that they should be sufficient in length and scope to fully develop LI students’ proficiency in English.

C. Myths About ESL Students. There are many common myths that have been refuted by the available research evidence, including that children have acquired a second language once they can speak it, that young children acquire languages more easily than older learners, that earlier immigrants acquired English more quickly and assimilated faster than current immigrants, and that the earlier English is introduced, the better for students. Because it is not possible within the framework of these guidelines to refute each of these myths one by one, the reader is referred instead to Myths and Realities: Best Practices for Language Minority Students (Samway and McKeon, 1999) for a discussion of each of these points. The point here is that educators must examine their “uninformed” beliefs against the available research evidence so that they understand the processes they are trying to support and because of this, design appropriate programs and supports. Otherwise, they may engage in harmful practices based on erroneous, seriously flawed beliefs.

## **VII. Aligning Goals, Standards, Materials, and Services with State Frameworks**

It goes without saying that programs for English Language Learners must be designed to help them meet state standards in all curricular areas. Until such time as students are no longer designated as LEP, the national ESL Standards (TESOL, 1997) should be used as interim “language arts” standards, yet teachers should always be aware of and moving toward attainment of the RI

English Language Arts Standards established for all Rhode Island students. Language development programs, materials, and instruction should be directly aligned with the PreK-12 ESL Standards during this period, cross-referencing to the ELA Standards as appropriate.

In all other subject areas, whether using an ESL or native language teaching approach, teachers must teach towards the standards, using materials that are appropriate for their learners proficiency and academic needs. Assessments must also be modified so that students can demonstrate their attainment of the standards. All of this is outlined in the state LEP assessment policy. Another useful document is TESOL's Scenarios for ESL Standards-Based Assessment (2000). (See also *the Assessment and Inclusion in Statewide Testing Sections of Quality Services for LEP Students: Self-Assessment*).

### VIII. Overall School Climate

In addition to evaluating the programs and services, teaching staff and curriculum materials being used with students, those responsible for the LEP program will also want to evaluate the overall school climate in buildings in which programs and services are offered to make sure that programs take place in conducive environments. Negative attitudes present among the student body, teaching and administrative staff towards those who are learning English or are new to this country, as well as outright prejudice and discrimination against immigrants and other language minorities can have a very deleterious effect on the academic success, social integration, and emotional well-being of LEP students. Such discrimination is explicitly prohibited by law and contrary to the goals of public education. To aid districts in assessing this important area, a school climate checklist is reprinted below.

#### Evaluation of Instruction Services for Bilingual Students

##### SCHOOL CLIMATE

Assess each feature below by circling the appropriate rating

1 = Not evident at all    5 = Strongly evident    DK = Don't Know

1	School is a safe place for teachers and students.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
2	School is characterized by an orderly environment.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
3	The school represents a sense of community.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
4	Continuous academic and social growth is associated with the school.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
5	Adequate instructional materials are available to teachers and students.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
6	Sufficient space allows appropriate instruction for all students.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
7	The school offers extracurricular activities that are accessible to all students.	1	2	3	4	5	DK

8	The school environment reflects the cultural backgrounds of all students.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
9	Administrators exhibit strong leadership skills.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
10	Goals and expectations are clearly understood by students, teachers and administrators.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
11	Administrators are supportive of teachers, students and parents.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
12	Administrators promote community involvement.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
13	Communication is open between administration and staff.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
14	Administrators provide for group problem-solving among teachers, students and parents as part of the decision-making process in all aspects of education.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
15	Teachers are motivated to take initiatives for school-wide projects.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
16	Administrators afford on-going staff development opportunities for professional and paraprofessional personnel.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
17	Students are motivated to learn.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
18	Pride in students' accomplishments is evidenced throughout the building.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
19	Cultural diversity is valued within the whole school.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
20	A sense of mutual respect is evident among all individuals within the school including those with disabilities.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
21	Bilingual students are integrated with the general school body.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
22	Parents are recognized as resources and are afforded opportunities to participate in numerous school activities.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
24	Parents are always welcome in school.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
26	A good faith effort is made to recruit teachers who speak the students' languages.	1	2	3	4	5	DK

## References

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- Intercultural Development Research Association (2000). Failing our children: Finding alternatives to in-grade retention (Policy Brief). San Antonio, TX: IDRA Institute for Policy and Leadership.
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- Short, D.J. (1993). Integrating language and culture in middle school American History classes. Educational Practice Report #8. Santa Cruz: National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning.

## **APPENDIX**

### **RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

**Quality Services for LEP Students  
Self-Assessment  
[\*cross-referenced to the LEP Regulations-Chapter 16-54]**

The LEP regulations were adopted by the Rhode Island Board of Regents for  
Elementary and Secondary Education, September 14, 2000.

**Quality Services for LEP Students  
Self-Assessment**  
[\*cross-referenced to the LEP Regulations--Chapter 16-54]

**Identification**

Our program:

	Person Responsible (by position)
<input type="checkbox"/> uses the state developed home language survey to determine each student's primary language [3.1]	
<input type="checkbox"/> maintains files of home language survey data [3.1.3] (where _____)	
<input type="checkbox"/> identifies students as 1) Beginner; 2) Beginner, Limited Formal Schooling (LFS); 3) Intermediate; 4) Advanced [4.3]	
<input type="checkbox"/> reports census information about our identified LEP students to the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in the state-approved format [6.2.1; 9.1.1]	

**Initial Assessment**

Our program:

	Person Responsible (by position)
<input type="checkbox"/> conducts an English proficiency assessment or uses appropriate test data from a previous school for all students identified as speaking a language other than English within 15 days of completing the Home Language Survey [3.2]	
<input type="checkbox"/> conducts a state-approved reading assessment for students scoring at the Intermediate or Advanced proficiency levels [3.2.4]	
<input type="checkbox"/> reviews all available test data, educational background information, grades and reports for each identified student [3.3]	
<input type="checkbox"/> conducts native language proficiency testing (listening, speaking, reading and writing) for each student, unless the Rhode Island Department of Education cannot supply us with information on valid procedures for doing so [3.3]	

### Initial Assessment, Cont.

	Person Responsible (by position)
<input type="checkbox"/> permanently records all student assessment and placement data including questions of exceptionality and forwards it to the appropriate district administrator for proper educational placement [3.5.4]	

### Ongoing Assessment

Our Program:

	Person Responsible (by position)
<input type="checkbox"/> assesses the progress of each LEP student annually [4.1.10]. this assessment includes a state-approved test of English language proficiency and a reading assessment [4.3.2.1]	
<input type="checkbox"/> maintains data on the academic progress of students and uses and analyzes this data to close all gaps in LEP student achievement [4.1.6]	
<input type="checkbox"/> conducts other assessment in cases where a student fails to progress, to determine the reasons for the lack of appropriate progress [4.3.2.2], including a determination of the possible need for continued LEP or other support [5.3.4]. This assessment is conducted by appropriately qualified personnel.	

### Program Placement/Programming

Our program:

	Person Responsible (by position)
<input type="checkbox"/> places identified students within 20 days of completion of the Home Language Survey [3.5] into one of the three approved program models (Transitional Bilingual Education, English as a Second Language, Two Way Bilingual Program) [2.3], according to the results of the language proficiency assessment conducted and the student's educational background.	
<input type="checkbox"/> places students according to the appropriate grade for their age, barring any unique educational back gound circumstances that indicate alternative placement, following state guidelines [3.5.3]	

## Staffing

Our program:

	Person Responsible (by position)
<input type="checkbox"/> uses trained personnel to conduct all LEP assessment [3.2.1]	
<input type="checkbox"/> has an identified district designee in charge of LEP programs who is responsible for student placement, maintenance of permanent files, parent notification, oversight of the program, and reporting to the state [3.5]. Our program has an administrator who is qualified (has LEP experience and the appropriate certification) and is responsible for the LEP program [4.2.1]. Day-to-day operations are coordinated by an experienced and qualified LEP coordinator (administrator or teacher) [4.2.1.2]	
<input type="checkbox"/> uses only appropriately certified/endorsed teachers to serve LEP students [4.1.7] and in sufficient ... [4.1.9]	
<input type="checkbox"/> places teacher assistants under the direct supervision of an LEP teacher, coordinator or administrator [4.2.1.5] and provides on-going professional development to this [4.2.2.5]. To the extent possible, our teacher assistants are bilingual in our high-incidence languages [4.2.2.5].	
<input type="checkbox"/> has at least one school-community liaison to facilitate communication, provide information, and encourage the involvement between the school and parents, agencies, churches, community groups, etc. [4.2.1.6; 4.2.2.4; 4.2.1].	
<input type="checkbox"/> insures that bilingual guidance counselors are certified and proficient in English and another language [4.2.1.7].	

## Exiting/Monitoring

Our program:

	Person Responsible (by position)
<input type="checkbox"/> withdraws all LEP services only if the student demonstrates the capability of academic success in a regular education program [2.4.2].	

### Exiting/Monitoring, Cont.

	Person Responsible (by position)
<input type="checkbox"/> insures that all exiting is determined on the basis of the results of annual testing and teacher assessment of the student's English language proficiency and classroom performance in the content areas as measures by grades, test scores, a state-approved English language proficiency test and reading assessment [5.2].	
<input type="checkbox"/> periodically reviews a student's progress throughout the school years for a minimum of two years after exiting [2.4.3] to determine his/her success in regular education [5.3.1].	
<input type="checkbox"/> continuously evaluates and documents each student's academic progress including level of performance and grades provided by the regular classroom teacher [5.3.2].	
<input type="checkbox"/> insures that each school participates fully in the Rhode Island Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT) program and carefully studies and addresses any weaknesses in their program revealed by the self-study guide "Closing the Performance Gaps of English Language Learners" [6.3.1].	

### Inclusion in Statewide Testing

Our program:

	Person Responsible (by position)
<input type="checkbox"/> participates in the state assessment program in accordance with state LEP assessment policy and reports our LEP students' progress as required [4.3.4.1]	
<input type="checkbox"/> identifies monitored students during the state assessment process [5.3.3]	
<input type="checkbox"/> presents families with the consolidated resource plan (CRP) and with information regarding the state assessment program, including the reporting of scores [7.2.4].	

### Grading, Promotion/Retention

Our program:

	Person Responsible (by position)
<input type="checkbox"/> uses the same grade reporting policies and procedures with LEP students as with all other students in the district [4.3.1.1]	
<input type="checkbox"/> provides progress reports in English and the parents'/ guardian's primary language [4.3.1.2], unless it would be an undue burden to do so.	
<input type="checkbox"/> has a policy for the promotion of LEP students [4.3.1.1]	
<input type="checkbox"/> does not retain any student solely because he/she lacks proficiency in English, rather only lack of effort, repeated absenteeism and academic failure (due to causes other than lack of English language proficiency) are used as the basis for retention [4.3.3.2].	

### Communication with Families/Family Involvement

Our program:

	Person Responsible (by position)
<input type="checkbox"/> provides simple descriptions to parents or guardians regarding their child's prescribed program placement [3.5.5] for both the initial and all subsequent program placements (partial/full mainstreaming), including the date of placement [3.5.5.2], and does so in both English and the parents' primary language, unless unduly burdensome [3.5.5.1]	
<input type="checkbox"/> understands that parents have the right to approve or deny the proposed placement [3.5.5.2] and to appeal any LEP decision affecting their child [7.3.1].	
<input type="checkbox"/> informs parents (in English and the primary language) of all partial mainstreaming [5.1] and program exiting decisions [5.2.3] and their rationale in cases where there is documented evidence of the student's ability to succeed in such placements.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Provides parents/guardians with progress reports in English and the native language, following policies established for all other parents [4.3]	

Communication with Families/Family Involvement, Cont.

	Person Responsible (by position)
<input type="checkbox"/> keeps records of all required parental notification [5.1.2.3; 5.5.3; 5.2.5; 7.4.1.6].	
<input type="checkbox"/> involves families/guardians of students with limited English proficiency in the development, implementation, and evaluation of programs for these students [7.1] and has at least one representative on the School Improvement Team (SIT) of each school [7.2.5].	
<input type="checkbox"/> has an established District Wide LEP Advisory Committee of educators and families [7.3.2.1] to advise the district and individual schools and advocate for students. Our LEP Advisory Committee has representation from the SIT of each school with LEP populations [7.3.2.2]. Family members comprise a majority of the membership with at least 50% of this group selected by the families of LEP students, and it includes a former LEP student, an LEP coordinator/administrator, an LEP teacher, a regular classroom teacher and/or administrator and fulfills the functions of the committee as outlined in Section 7.3.3.	
<input type="checkbox"/> assists the Committee to develop its organizational structure, bylaws, and procedures; provides technical assistance and in-service training as needed, makes records and data available to the Committee as permitted by law, and notifies LEP parents of the Committee and how to contact its chair [7.4].	
<input type="checkbox"/> assures that the Local LEP Advisory Committee meet at least four times per year, keep official minutes, submit an annual report of its activities and suggestions to the school district, and provides interpreters and other services to the Committee as needed [7.5.5].	
<input type="checkbox"/> makes public announcements of all meetings of the Local LEP Advisory Committee and follows public reporting guidelines [7.5.2; 7.5.4].	

### Special Provisions for Low Incidence Programs

Our program:

	Person Responsible (by position)
<input type="checkbox"/> has not modified the minimum number of minutes of ESL instruction for any LEP student unless his/her academic success has been documented [4.1.11]	
<input type="checkbox"/> has made sure that the LEP Program Administrator is provided with training in second language acquisition within one year of being assigned the program or has appointed an appropriately qualified LEP Coordinator [4.2.2.1]	
<input type="checkbox"/> is aware that it may establish a cooperative program with another school system(s) using combined funds [6.1.6]	

### Special Provisions for High Incidence Programs

Our program:

	Person Responsible (by position)
<input type="checkbox"/> has a full time LEP administrator if we meet the condition of having 300 or more LEP students [4.2.2.2]	
<input type="checkbox"/> employs bilingual guidance counselors proficient in English and high incidence languages [4.2.2.6].	